

MONTANA Economy at a Glance

JUNE 2008

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

(Does not include self-employed or agricultural employment)

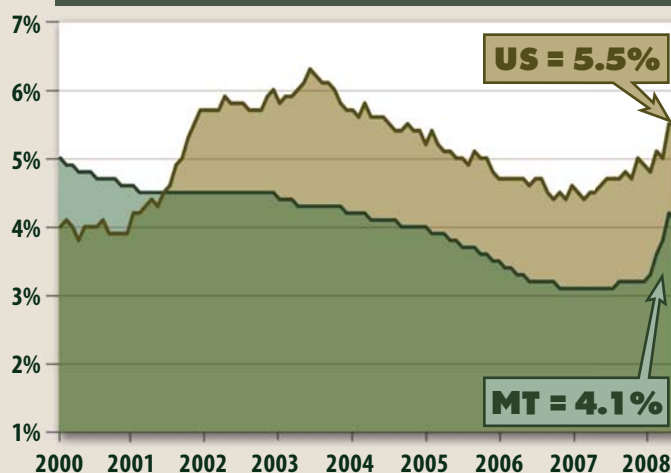
| Industry Employment (in thousands) | June(P) 2008 | May 2008 | Net Change | Percent Change |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Total Non-Agricultural | 453.4 | 451.0 | 2.4 | 0.5% |
| Natural Resources & Mining | 8.9 | 8.8 | 0.1 | 1.1% |
| Construction | 33.1 | 33.0 | 0.1 | 0.3% |
| Manufacturing | 20.5 | 20.7 | -0.2 | -1.0% |
| Trade, Transportation, & Utilities | 93.7 | 93.9 | -0.2 | -0.2% |
| Information | 7.6 | 7.6 | 0.0 | 0.0% |
| Financial Activities | 21.5 | 21.6 | -0.1 | -0.5% |
| Professional & Business Services | 42.6 | 42.5 | 0.1 | 0.2% |
| Education & Health Services | 60.2 | 60.0 | 0.2 | 0.3% |
| Leisure & Hospitality | 59.9 | 60.1 | -0.2 | -0.3% |
| Other Services | 17.3 | 17.3 | 0.0 | 0.0% |
| Total Government | 88.1 | 85.5 | 2.6 | 3.0% |

(P) denotes preliminary figures

Montana's seasonally-adjusted non-agricultural payroll employment increased by 2,400 jobs (0.5%) from May to June 2008. By far, the largest gains occurred within Total Government, with 2,600 (+3.0%) jobs added over the month. Education and Health Services also saw an increase, adding 200 (+0.3%) new jobs.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

Seasonally Adjusted



Montana's seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate dropped slightly to 4.1% in June 2008 from 4.2% in May. The U.S. remained steady over the month at 5.5%.

NON-FARM EMPLOYMENT

In Thousands



Research and Analysis Bureau

"Montana's Workforce Information Center"

Phone: (406) 444-2430 or (800) 541-3904

P.O. Box 1728 Helena, MT 59624-1728

www.ourfactsyourfuture.org

Using MCIS to find employers and employees and escape...

THE TWILIGHT ZONE

By Annette Miller



"There is a fifth dimension, beyond that which is known to man. It is a dimension as vast as space and as timeless as infinity. It is the middle ground between light and shadow, between science and superstition, and it lies between the pit of man's fears and the summit of his knowledge. This is the dimension of imagination. It is an area which we call the Twilight Zone."

-Rod Serling (Twilight Zone, Season 1, 1959-1960)



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Many people are familiar with the opening narration from the *Twilight Zone* television show, but it may be particularly resonant for people navigating the murky depths of the labor market. People who are hunting for work or searching for workers may feel like they've stepped into the *Twilight Zone*. Job seekers may find themselves still looking for work long after their unemployment benefits have run out. Talented people, through no fault of their own, can become victims of a declining industry. They wonder why it's so hard to find a job when they have a good work ethic and a desire to put their knowledge and skills to work. The "pit of man's fears" in this dimension between employment and unemployment is that they'll never find a good job again.

Employers may also face difficulty finding good workers who possess the required skills. Turnover can kill their bottom line because they have to keep retraining new employees to replace those who weren't the right "fit" for the job. The "middle ground between light and shadow" for employers is trying to find that perfect balance between work ethics and skills.

Sometimes the gap between job seeker and employer seems "as vast as space and as timeless as infinity." At the end of Rod Serling's famous opening lines, we get a clue about how to leave this dimension. After all, this is the dimension of imagination. Knowledge is the key to leaving the *Twilight Zone*.

Imagine if you will, Kevin—a man who had been employed as a Logging Equipment Operator for 10 years. He was laid off when the company he worked for closed its doors. Kevin loved his job but was unsure about the stability of the industry. He felt he needed to change careers to better provide for his family.

Imagine also a second man, Jason. Jason is responsible for the maintenance shop of a large construction company. When a long-term em-

ployee retired, Jason needed to fill his position as a Heavy Equipment Mechanic. None of the people who have applied have any experience with operating or repairing heavy equipment. He needed to find someone with the right skills as soon as possible.

These two men are about to come together in the *Twilight Zone*.

When the logging company shut down, the local Job Service Workforce Center sent out its rapid response team, and Kevin took full advantage of their information. He was especially intrigued to learn about the Montana Career Information System (MCIS) and the SKILLS program. What he learned turned out to be the key to finding Jason. The Job Service staff explained that the SKILLS program in MCIS could take his former job as a Logging Equipment Operator and give him a list of occupations that use the same skills. He could then use this list in a number of different ways, either to help him figure out jobs he might like to train for, or to help him market his skills to a prospective employer. He was told he could use the SKILLS program at the Job Service office, or he could do it from home. He opted to do it from home, accessing it from the Student Assistance Foundation's website at: www.smartaboutcollege.org.

Address http://www.smartaboutcollege.org/ Search

STUDENT ASSISTANCE FOUNDATION
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College Access Hotline: (877) COLGATE (265-4463)

SmartAboutCollege

| Get to College | Pay for College | SAF in the Community | You Can Help |
|---|--|--|--------------|
| Home Resources MCIS - Montana Career Information System Montana Students Save Program Free ACT Practice Test Free SAT Practice Test | In The News <ul style="list-style-type: none">SAF Hosts "A Step Ahead" College Prep Camp for Montana Foster YouthsMSU-Billings Receives \$141,504 from SAF for Student GrantsRocky Mountain College to Receive \$24,397 from SAF for Student Grants | Our Mission <p>The Student Assistance Foundation's mission is to provide students and families with the knowledge and tools to finance and pursue their postsecondary education. The Foundation does this by offering a range of programs that include grants, community outreach, counseling and training on education finance planning.</p> | |

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After logging into the system, Kevin selected SKILLS under Other CIS Components. Once he got into the SKILLS program he hit the Occ Select button.

All Kevin had to do next is use the alphabetical index to find Logger in the occupations list and all of the skills he used as a Logging Equipment Operator appeared on the screen. To find his list of matching occupations all he had to do next was click on the Rate Skills button and select the Top 30 Occupations report. On the list was the occupation Heavy Equipment Mechanic, a job that Kevin was very interested in.

| Skills to Select | | | 5 Very Satisfying Skills | 20 Somewhat Satisfying Skills |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 01. Dependability | 25. Creativity | 49. Science Reasoning | Very | Somewhat |
| 02. Flexibility | 26. Aesthetic Judgment | 50. Reading | | |
| 03. Persistence | 27. Stress Tolerance | 51. Writing | | |
| 04. Integrity | 28. Hazards Tolerance | 52. Speaking | | |
| 05. Efficiency | 29. Discomfort Tolerance | 53. Listening | | |
| 06. Competitiveness | 30. Repetition Tolerance | 54. Concentrating | | |
| 07. Social Perception | 31. Following Procedures | 55. Information Gathering | | |
| 08. Independent Work | 32. Categorizing | 56. Evaluating | | |
| 09. Team Work | 33. Record Keeping | 57. Advising | | |
| 10. Working with the Public | 34. Attention to Detail | 58. Synthesizing | | |
| 11. Assisting/Caring | 35. Verifying Information | 59. Analyzing | | |
| 12. Performing | 36. Installing | 60. Planning | | |
| 13. Instructing | 37. Inspecting | 61. Active Learning | | |
| 14. Finger Dexterity | 38. Repairing | 62. Using Knowledge | | |
| 15. Manual Dexterity | 39. Troubleshooting | 63. Safety of Others | | |
| 16. Motor Coordination | 40. Controlling Machines | 64. Persuading | | |
| 17. Stamina | 41. Operating Vehicles | 65. Negotiating | | |
| 18. Strength | 42. Using Computers | 66. Confronting | | |
| 19. Rapid Response | 43. Programming | 67. Initiating | | |
| 20. Sound Discrimination | 44. Technology Design | 68. Coordinating | | |
| 21. Shape Discrimination | 45. Calculating | 69. Directing/Leading | | |
| 22. Color Vision | 46. Estimating | 70. Decision Making | | |
| 23. Depth Perception | 47. Budgeting | 71. Managing Resources | | |
| 24. Visualization | 48. Math Reasoning | 72. Impact of Responsibility | | |

Buttons: Occ Select, Start Over, Skill Definitions, << Remove, Rate Skills

SKILLS Assessment

Select an Occupation

Click on an occupation title to select it. The skills of the occupation will appear on the right-hand side.

Title Index Cluster Index

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T

L Occupations

- Landscapers and Groundskeepers
- Landscapers and Groundskeepers
- Laundry and Dry Cleaning Workers
- Law Clerks
- Lawyers
- Legal Secretaries
- Lens Grinders and Polishers
- Librarians
- Library Assistants and Bookmobile Drivers
- Library Technical Assistants
- License Clerks
- Licensed Practical Nurses
- Life Guards and Ski Patrolers
- Light Truck Drivers
- Line Installers and Repairers
- Loan Clerks
- Loan Officers
- Locksmiths
- Locomotive Engineers
- Loggers

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| 15. Manual Dexterity | 33. Record Keeping | 57. Advising | | |
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| | 48. Math Reasoning | 72. Impact of Responsibility | | |

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Montana Career Information System - SKILLS Assessment - MCIS

Back

Address: http://mcis.intocareers.org/skills/SkillsTop30Occs.aspx

72 * Hazardous Material Workers

70 * Highway Maintenance Workers

72 * Insulation Installers

72 * Janitors

72 * Paving Equipment Operators

72 * Plumbers and Pipefitters

72 * Roofers

74 * Roofers

78 * Septic Tank Servicers and Sewer Pipe Cleaners

74 * Structural Metal Workers

Manufacturing, Installation, and Repair

72 * Crane and Tower Operators

76 * Forklift Operators

72 * Gas and Oil Drillers

72 * Hoist and Winch Operators

72 * Pump Operators

74 * Roustabouts

74 * Saving Machine Operators

72 * Welders and Solderers

76 * Welding and Soldering Machine Operators

76 * Woodworking Machine Operators

Transportation, Communication, and Logistics

Heavy Equipment Mechanics

Tugboats

Tank Car, Truck, and Ship Loaders

Jason visited with the local Job Service staff asking for help in hiring a heavy equipment mechanic. One of the specialists there mentioned that they thought Jason needed to look for people with the right skills, not necessarily job-specific experience. The specialist sat down at the resource computer and showed Jason

the SKILLS program in MCIS. Within 2 minutes, Jason had a list of skills for the occupation and a list of 30 occupations with similar skills. The specialist told Jason that if anyone with experience in any of those 30 occupations applied for the job he may want to seriously consider hiring them.

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Address <http://mtcis.intocareers.org/skills/skills>

D. Perceptual Skills

- ☐ 20. Sound Discrimination
- ☐ 21. Shape Discrimination
- ☐ 22. Color Vision
- ☐ 23. Depth Perception
- ☐ 24. Visualizing

E. Situational Skills

- ☐ 28. Hazards Tolerance
- ☐ 29. Discomfort Tolerance
- ☐ 30. Repetition Tolerance

F. Processing Skills

- ☐ 31. Following Procedures
- ☐ 34. Attention to Detail

G. Technical Skills

- ☐ 37. Inspecting
- ☐ 38. Repairing
- ☐ 40. Controlling Machines
- ☐ 41. Operating Vehicles

H. Math and Science Skills

- ☐ 45. Calculating
- ☐ 46. Estimating

I. Communication Skills

- ☐ 52. Speaking
- ☐ 53. Listening
- ☐ 54. Concentrating

J. Problem Solving Skills

- ☐ 55. Information Gathering

Kevin found Jason's job opening in the newspaper and knew right away how he could use the information from the SKILLS program to market himself for the job. Using the View Skills report for Heavy Equipment Mechanics, he could see which skills he possessed as a Logging Equipment Operator were a perfect or near match for Heavy Equipment Mechanic. He chose to focus on the skills of depth perception, manual dexterity, motor coordination, hazards tolerance, controlling machines, strength, discomfort tolerance and inspecting. When filling out the application, Kevin highlighted these skills in the description of his work as a logging equipment operator. In the cover letter, he explained how his previous position required him to operate, maintain, and repair logging equipment, which required the same skills needed to work as a heavy equipment mechanic.

Jason scanned his pile of applications, carefully looking at his list of 30 occupations from SKILLS. He put any applications that showed experience in any of the 30 occupations into one pile. As he went through the applications in this pile, he noticed there was something different about Kevin's. It specifically mentioned the skills that Jason was looking for. In fact, Kevin's application was the only one that mentioned skills at all.

Jason hired Kevin shortly after calling him in for an interview, and both are happy with the outcome. Is this just a story of two beings stumbling through the dimension of the sometimes frustrating labor market, or perhaps is it a lesson for all of us? Could it be that the answer to overcoming the frustration lies within cyberspace, in a space called SKILLS?

The MCIS program is produced by the Research & Analysis Bureau of the Department of Labor and Industry. Through a grant provided by The Student Assistance Foundation, the program is provided to schools across Montana, and for home use by the general public. You can visit the Research & Analysis Bureau's website at: www.ourfactsyourfuture.org. Click on Career Resource Network and select the Job Seeker button. You can get to the public access site through the Student Assistance Foundation link.

Address <http://www.ourfactsyourfuture.org/cgi/career/?PAGEID=36&SUBID=165>

mt.gov
Montana's Official State Website

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & INDUSTRY - RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS BUREAU

Home My Future Career Resource Network Labor Market Info Download Data Tables

cis **STUDENT ASSISTANCE FOUNDATION**

Montana Career Information System (MCIS)
Login

For anyone with an existing account
For new users or anyone with a SAF account

Public access to MCIS through the Student Assistance Foundation (SAF)

- The **Montana Career Information System (MCIS)** is now available **free** to all Montanans (SAF), their MCIS Sponsors and Community Mentors.
- MCIS is a comprehensive career information and planning delivery system. MCIS meets the highest standards for delivering accurate, useful information to assist users in making informed decisions about their career and educational plans while learning how to achieve more about MCIS, MCIS options, and training [click here](#).
- MCIS is available in a high school/adult version or a junior/middle school version. To learn student/customer usage and progress through MCIS you will need to fill out a MCIS Grant Program Agreement Form from the Student Assistance Foundation. This will give you your own sub site within the Career Information System site where your students/customers will be able to set up their own portfolios and allow you administrative access to reports on system usage, portfolios, set up staff accounts, manage groups or portfolios.

For a copy of this form please email us at mcrn@mt.gov or call us at (800) 541-3904. We will need your name, organization, and mailing address to send the form to you.

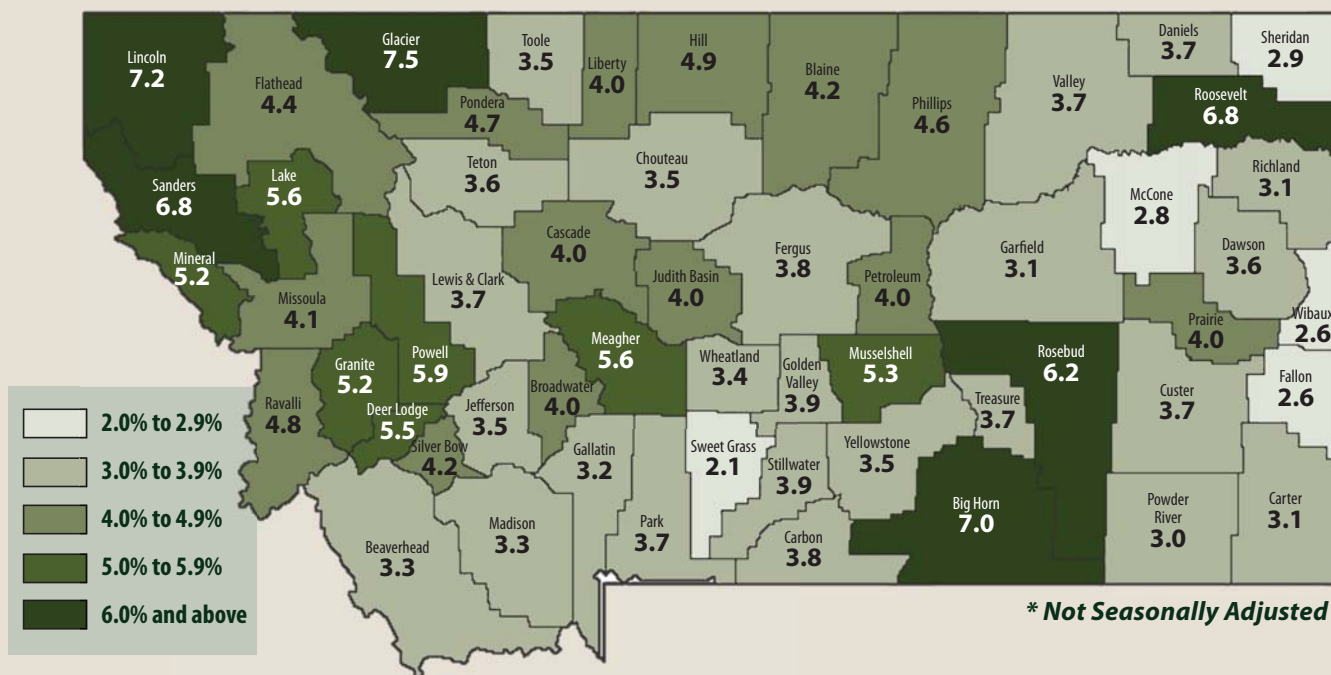
start

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Finding the right job or the right employee is very important to both the job seeker and employer. Finding the right skills match is made easier with the SKILLS program in MCIS. Why not give it try? You have nothing to lose and everything to gain.

County Unemployment Rates* - June 2008

Montana Average Rate: 4.1%



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